India's Vice-President Inaugurates Vedic Conference

By C.S.H.N. Murthy, Hyderabad

Tirupathi Devasthanam convened a four-day National Vedic Conference January 28, 1992, on Tirumala Hill in an effort to recover the ancient Vedic traditions. By spreading a message of equality and love the conference hoped to contain the violence and hatred growing day-by-day in India. This mammoth event was attended by 1,500 Vedic seers and scholars from all over the country—including India's Vice-President. A festive feeling pervaded everywhere, aided by the pleasant breeze on Tirumala Hill and the sky's serene heavenly clouds. It was a journey into the Vedic past aboard the time machine of H.G. Wells. Everyone here expressed a deep yearning for a return of the beautiful Vedic Age.

Swami Shri Jayendra Saraswati of Kanchi and 18 other heads of various monasteries presided over the meeting. During the week-long deliberation, scores of research papers dealing with scientific aspects of Vedas were read. The last such large-scale scientific analysis of the Vedas occurred before India's independence.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, the Vice-President of India and a great Sanskrit scholar and a constitutional expert in his own right, suggested the need for bringing out Vedic mathematics on a par with European mathematics. Sharma pointed out that Professor Peter Beckman in his recent book on *History of Pi* referred to His Holiness, Shri Bharathi Krishna Thirtha's interesting book, *Vedic Mathematics*. Beckman cited the swami's insightful analysis brought to light the structured mathematical thinking of ancient Vedic scholars. Sharma said that the Vedas contain millions of scientific solutions.

Professor Kuppa Siva Subramanyam explained the scientific aspects involved in Vedic hymns which invoke gods for timely rains. Other scholars brought out the botanical and agricultural knowledge hidden in Vedas. Some gave a discourse on Vedic dialectics and logic and showed how they are relevant today. Others described social relations such as matrimonial sanctity, moral life and non-violence. They said that peaceful, social co-existence and love was the universal governing law found in the Vedas.

The Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam pledged to publish the research papers read out here during the conference. The Chief Minister of Andrah Pradesh, N. Janardhan Reddy, promised to incorporate portions of the Vedas into the state's school curricula right from upper primary level. A grand exhibit of Vedic texts written by various scholars of eminence was the high point for many of the conference visitors.

Each day's events were followed by a cultural festival which included music and dance by eminent carnatic musicians and bharata natyam dancers. The conference concluded February 3rd on a grand note with a feeling that, among all the ancient traditions, the Vedic tradition is the superior and in certain respects more scientific than today's science.

An ebullient group of Vedic scholars including India's Vice-President Dr. Sharma (2nd from left) at Tirupati temple.